

AMBS alumni news

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2016 Alumni Ministry and Service Recognition LINDA SHELLY

She moved back to Kansas in 2001 to support her parents during her father's illness and death, and was called to become **Mennonite Mission Network's** regional director for Latin America in 2002. In addition to supporting mission workers in Latin America, coordinating programs, and connecting North American and Latin American congregations and conferences, she serves as an advisor to the **Movement of Anabaptist Women Doing Theology in Latin America** (MTAL) and has helped **Mennonite Women USA** bring Sister Care training to Latin America with MTAL.

Shelly has been a key person in helping initiate the **Global Anabaptist Network of Women Doing Theology**, which took root at the Mennonite World Conference Assembly in Pennsylvania in 2015 with the hope of strengthening and encouraging Anabaptist women around the world.

In addition to her role with Mission Network, Linda is vice president of the board of directors of *Mennonite World Review*. In 2002, she received the Journey Award from Everence for her stewardship of gifts and resources. She is a member of **First Mennonite Church** in Newton, where she has served on the Outreach Commission and in other roles. She also regularly attends **Iglesia Menonita Casa Betania**, which meets in the same building.

Shelly says she came to AMBS after her first term of service in Honduras, where she worked with the Mennonite Church with refugees from the wars in neighboring El Salvador and Nicaragua.

"Serving in Honduras was very challenging and also was a time of spiritual growth," she says. "I felt I needed a place to process what I had experienced and do more biblical and theological work to reach clearer understandings and integrate my experiences in Latin America into my faith and life."

She says she appreciated her professors' openness in encouraging her to use experiences from Latin America as case studies and as a basis for some of her assignments.

"This helped with integration," she reflects. "When I returned to Honduras, I took with me key questions from my hermeneutics class like: What did this passage mean to the people who first heard it? What does it mean for people here in this place? What does it call us to do?"



Linda Shelly
(MAPS 1989)
(Photo by David
Fisher Fast,
Mennonite
Mission
Network)

"I think it's good that AMBS is a place where people can go who are serious about deepening their faith and biblical and theological understandings, even if they aren't sure where their studies will lead," she adds. "I would also encourage AMBS to actively work with students in discernment processes towards roles in mission, ministry and broader church service."

Scott Litwiller, data services manager for the AMBS Development Team, was supervised by Shelly while doing mission work in Colombia from December 2011 through October 2013.

"She has a great passion for Latin America," he says. "She is very knowledgeable and cares for her workers and the communities they are in."

Shelly accepted the award in person at AMBS on Nov. 3 and shared reflections about her ministry. ●

—Annette Brill Bergstresser

Linda Shelly of Newton, Kansas, Latin America director for Mennonite Mission Network, has been named the recipient of Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary's Alumni Ministry and Service Recognition for 2016.

The **AMBS Alumni Executive Committee** selected Shelly to receive the award, which recognizes a graduate who has given at least 10 years of faithful service to God. Shelly graduated from AMBS in 1989 with a Master of Arts: Peace Studies.

"As we thought about people who have contributed, Linda came to mind as someone who has served long and well," says Kay Bontrager-Singer of Goshen, Indiana, president of the committee.

Shelly grew up in Newton and graduated from **Bethel College** in North Newton, Kansas, having majored in history, social sciences and liberal arts with an emphasis in Spanish. From 1981 to 1983, she worked with **Mennonite Central Committee** (MCC) in Bolivia in rural education. She lived in Honduras from 1983 to 1987, serving as MCC country representative and in refugee camps, and from 1990 to 1992, working in justice and peace ministry and nurturing a new faith community with the **Honduran Mennonite Church**. She also worked for a total of 12 years in two different time periods at MCC headquarters in Akron, Pennsylvania, first as a voluntary service worker in Human Resources and then as director for Latin America and the Caribbean.

KEEP IN TOUCH WITH AMBS

- Follow AMBS on Facebook: facebook.com/followAMBS ("Like" us to get regular updates.)
- Join the AMBS Alumni Facebook group: facebook.com/groups/AMBSalumni
- Bookmark the AMBS calendar: ambs.edu/news-events
- Listen to audio recordings of recent events: ambs.edu/news-events (select "Event audio")

Alumni Executive Committee nominee

Rolando A. Sosa-Granados

Rolando A. Sosa-Granados has been nominated to join the AMBS Alumni Executive Committee this year. From 2006 to 2010, he was a student in the dual-degree program of Andrews University and AMBS, completing his Master of Social Work in August 2008 and his Master of Divinity in December 2010.

Previously, Sosa-Granados served part time as a member of the pastoral team at Iglesia Menonita del Buen Pastor in Goshen, Indiana. During this time, he started his bivocational career, serving at-risk students in the cities of Goshen and Elkhart. This ministry with at-risk students expanded, and during his time at



seminary, Sosa-Granados started a more in-depth ministry for children and families caught in the legal system. Through walking alongside this population, he became aware of the correlation between family dynamics, mental illness, failure in school and incarceration. This experience confirmed his sense of call to ministry, and he has now been serving children in need of mental health services and their families for more than three years at a nonprofit community mental health organization.

Sosa-Granados has been married to Agustina Sosa for 32 years; they have five children and eight grandchildren.

To affirm Rolando A. Sosa-Granados as a member at large on the AMBS Alumni Executive Committee, please contact Janeen Bertsche Johnson, alumni director: jbjohnson@ambs.edu or 574.296.6216.

AMBS NOTES

Reconnect on AMBS Alumni Facebook group!

This summer, AMBS Alumni changed the format of our Facebook page from a business "Like" page to a group format. In this format, both AMBS staff and alumni can post within the group.

We invite you to post about life updates, recent accomplishments and other news you would like your fellow alumni to know about. Joining this group can help you stay up to date on alumni news. It's also a great way to reconnect with seminary friends whom you may not have heard from for a while. About 540 people have joined already, so chances are there's someone you will know!



If you join the group, or are already part of it, we encourage you to add other alumni if they are not part of it already. An alum is anyone who has completed 12 or more credit hours at AMBS.

We can't wait to hear from you! Join the group: facebook.com/groups/AMBSalumni

Association of Theological Schools (ATS) Alumni Questionnaire

AMBS is sending an electronic questionnaire to our alumni/alumnae who graduated in 2009, 2010 and 2011. We hope to learn from you how we can improve our degree programs for the future. This survey was used in 2013 for a research project undertaken by AMBS; we are resuming its use for subsequent graduating classes. Please help us by completing the survey when you receive the link. Thank you in advance for your help!

Alumni student scholarship

We mistakenly announced on the Alumni Facebook group that the Alumni Student Scholarship that has been the Alumni Executive Committee's fall fundraising focus for the past three years had been fully funded. Unfortunately, that is not yet the case. We are grateful for the funds that have already been donated in support of the next generation of leaders, and invite your gifts to grow the fund so that we can begin awarding a scholarship to a current student.

2017 Alumni Ministry and Service Recognition

Please nominate one or more AMBS graduates for recognition of their ministry and service. Contact Alumni Director Janeen Bertsche Johnson by Jan. 25 at jbjohnson@ambs.edu or 574.296.6216.

Nominate a potential student!

Did you know that alumni are one of the top three sources of new AMBS students? Take a moment to think of three (or more) people for whom you think AMBS would be a good fit. Put them in touch with our Admissions Team at admissions@ambs.edu! Potential students can schedule a visit for a day that's convenient for them, or attend our Seminary Preview Day on Friday, March 3, 2017.

Website redesigned

AMBS is launching a new website in late January 2017! While the main address will remain the same (ambs.edu), many direct links will change since our content will be organized in new ways. As the site continues to take shape, note that the search feature can help you find what you're looking for.

ALUMNI NEWS NOTES

By year

Paul Friesen (ThB 1947)

is living at Schowalter Villa, Hesston, Kansas, and continues to work in an art studio provided by Hesston College since being a faculty member at the college (1957–78, 2001–05).

Lawrence Klippenstein

(BD 1962) has been working on building a cairn at the Mennonite Heritage Village in Steinbach, Manitoba, to give tribute to Canadian conscientious objectors on the 75th anniversary of alternative service being offered in Canada.

Lawrence Hart and his wife, Betty, were honored at a celebration dinner Oct. 8 for their faithfulness in their work with Mennonite Indian Leaders Council (GC), Native Mennonite Ministries of Mennonite Church USA, and Mennonite Central Committee.

Palmer Becker (MRE 1965)

has completed eight years of short-term teaching trips to 15 countries. In his retirement, he continues to teach and lead workshops on the theme, "What is an Anabaptist Christian?"

James E. Horsch (BD

1966) completed the annual daily Bible readings for the Adult Bible Study Guide from MennoMedia.

Thomas Rutschman (MDiv

1983) continues to serve as a mission associate with Mennonite Mission Network in Jokkmokk, Sweden. In addition to being active in the local free church, Tom and his wife, Disa, teach language at the local middle school. Tom was diagnosed with Parkinson's a few years ago.

Yoshihiro Tomura (MDiv

1985) turned 91 this year and serves as a lay leader in his small rural church in Japan. He remembers with gratitude his professors Henry Poettcker and Millard Lind.



John (MDiv 1964) and Mary Gaeddert (seated, above) were honored for their lifetime of ministry at an Oct. 2 reception at Bethel College Mennonite Church in North Newton, Kansas.

At the event, Ken Hawkley, senior associate director of development at AMBS, presented John with a ceramic oil lamp and a framed certificate of appreciation for his role in encouraging people to pursue studies at AMBS.

In part through John's influence, a number of people from Bethesda Mennonite Church in Henderson, Nebraska — where he pastored from 1955 to 1965 — chose to pursue seminary training. Several of them are pictured above behind the Gaedderts: (l. to r.) **Amanda Friesen Rempel (MATS 2001)**, **Clarence Rempel (alum*)**, **Lois Thieszen Preheim (MDiv 2005)**, **Lauren Friesen (MDiv 1970)**, **Steve Ratzlaff (MDiv 1998)**, **Mel Friesen (MDiv 1976)**, **Marvin Thieszen (alum*)**, **Ardean Goertzen (MDiv 1972)**, **Rosie Epp (MDiv 1983)**, **Leron Peters (MRE 1965)**. (Photo by Ken Hawkley)

Read the full article online: ambs.edu/news-events

* has taken 12 or more credits at AMBS

Bassam Bannoura (MDiv 1989) and his wife, Hiyam, moved back to Beit Sahour, Palestine, in September after living in the United States for several years. Bassam was interim pastor of the Arabic Baptist Church in Washington, D.C., for 18 months, and now is pastor of Shepherd's Field Evangelical Church. He is starting an organization to try to keep Christians in the Holy Land.

Jack Mace (MDiv 1989)

is semi-retired but has ongoing responsibilities with the National Alliance on Mental Illness of Reno County, Kansas, in Hutchinson.

David L. Myers (MDiv 1991)

was appointed by President Obama in 2009 to be senior advisor to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) administrator and director of the Department of Homeland Security's Center for Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships. He was a special guest at Goshen (Indiana) College in March 2016 and at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Virginia, in fall 2015.

Walter Bergen (MDiv

1992) spent several sabbatical weeks in summer 2016 doing research and writing at AMBS. He was also involved

with the distribution of 7,200 First Nations Bibles in Ontario this summer through his work as national team leader of Canadian Lifelight Ministries.

Stephen (MDiv 1998) and Janet (MATS 2008) Plenert

have begun a Mennonite Central Committee service assignment in Santa Cruz, Bolivia.

Garry Jost (MDiv 2000) is on the faculty at Marylhurst University near Portland, Oregon. In August he traveled to Ethiopia for research related to the Textual History of the Ethiopic Old Testament project, which researches the textual

history of 14th- through 20th-century Ethiopian manuscripts. He has developed computer technology to analyze these manuscripts. The trip also included visits to monasteries and museums to examine manuscripts, to the rock-hewn churches of Lalibela, and to the historic sites of the Axumite Kingdom in northern Ethiopia.

Ray Epp (MAPS 2001) spoke at the International Economics of Happiness Conference in Jeonju, South Korea, in October on creating local alternatives to the globalizing food system. He continues to run Menno Village Farm in Hokkaido, Japan.

Stefanus Haryono (MACF 2001) is working on a Ph.D. in spirituality at Claremont (California) School of Theology. Until 2015 he was a member of the teaching faculty at Duta Wacana Christian University in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

Joann Kaiser (MDiv 2002) received tenure as a faculty member at Indiana University Kokomo, where she has been teaching since 2008. She is senior lecturer of communication arts and has twice received the Amicus Award, chosen by student vote.

Bock Ki Kim (MDiv 2002) and his wife, Sook Kyoung Park, have finished their first three-year term as Mennonite Church Canada Witness workers in South Korea. They spent the summer itinerating in churches in Canada, then returned for another term in South Korea.

June Thomsen (MDiv 2003) completed an interim pastoral assignment at Bethel College Mennonite Church in North Newton, Kansas. **Dawn Yoder Harms (MDiv 1999)** began as lead pastor of BCMC Nov. 1.

Stephen Obold-Eshleman (MDiv 2004) is working for Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon doing refugee resettlement. He is also involved with Stephen Ministry at Portland Mennonite Church.

Char Harris Allen (MDiv 2005) is pastor of Monroe United Methodist Church outside Decatur, Indiana.

Jason Harrison (MACF 2005) received a Ph.D. in leadership and organizational development from Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan, and is now working for Horizon Education Alliance in Elkhart (Indiana) County.

Lois Siemens (MDiv 2006), pastor of Superb (Saskatchewan) Mennonite Church, creates a calendar each year from her photography. Her 2017 calendar is called "Alphabet of Gratitude: Naming and Colouring Our

Thankfulness in Sky and Image."

Janet Guthrie (MDiv 2008) retired from ministry at First Mennonite Church of Champaign-Urbana at the end of June.

Joseph Kamau (MDiv 2009) is academic dean at Kenya Baptist Theological College in Limuru and lead pastor of Tigon Baptist Church.

Mark Seymour (MDiv 2012) concluded his work with a Veterans Affairs (VA) hospital in western Texas this summer and is now working at the Jesse Brown VA Medical Center in Chicago, helping homeless veterans work on addiction issues.

Janie Beck Kreider (MDiv 2013) became director of communications for Mennonite Church USA's Executive Board staff in February.



Alumni gatherings

On Oct. 16, **Janeen Bertsche Johnson (MDiv 1989)**, alumni director, campus pastor and admissions counselor, met with a group of alumni and friends at the home of **Todd (MDiv 2003)** and Dawn Lehman in Keizer, Oregon. Pictured (l. to r.): Becky Swora, Louise Newswanger, **Matthew Swora (MDiv 1990)**, **Carl Newswanger (MRE 1969)**, **Garry Jost (MDiv 2000)**, Paul Boers, **Todd Lehman (MDiv 2003)**, **Jennifer Gingerich (MDiv 2012)**, **David Engle (MDiv 1991)**, Janeen Bertsche Johnson. Not pictured: Dawn Lehman. (Photo by Barry Johnson)

During this trip, Janeen also met with **Stephen Obold-Eshleman (MDiv 2004)** and **Curt Weaver (MACF 2006)** at Portland (Oregon) Mennonite Church, and with **Marlene (MDiv 1988, professor emerita)** and Stan Kropf in Port Townsend, Washington.

On Oct. 11, Janeen and Kansas Center Director **Katherine Goerzen (MDiv 2015)** hosted an alumni gathering at Bethel College in North Newton, Kansas. A list of participants appears on the AMBS Alumni Facebook group.

Alumni news notes, cont'd.

Dianna Graham (MDiv 2014) started the Shalom Peace Center in Elkhart and has begun at least three small study groups. She also organized a "Oneness Day Celebration" in Elkhart in June.

Trina Siegrist (MDiv 2014) and her family moved to Nairobi, Kenya, this fall to work at Rosslyn Bible Academy.

Publications

Willard Roth (BD 1961, MDiv 1971) edited *Mennonite Men Can Cook, Too* (Good Books, 2015), which includes recipes from AMBS alumni **Willard Swartley (BD 1962, professor emeritus)** and **John Bender (CTh 2014)**.

Robert (Jack) Suderman (MRE 1975) has published *Re-Imagining the Church: Implications of Being a People in the World* (Wipf and Stock, 2016), using writings from his years of church leadership.

Dorothy Yoder Nyce (MDiv 1981) has published *Mennonites Encounter Hinduism: An Annotated Bibliography* (2015).

Jeff Nixa (MDiv 1999) wrote *A Modern Shaman's Field Manual: How to Awaken Your Power and Heal the Earth* (Bison, 2016), which explores the inner landscape from various models, including shamanism, Jungian psychology and other traditions.

Alicia Buhler (MDiv 2011) wrote *The Minister's Handbook of Reproductive Loss* (Blurb, 2016), covering themes of miscarriage, stillbirth, early infant death, infertility and more from a spiritual care perspective. She lives in Kitchener, Ontario.

All You Need Is Love: Honoring the Diversity of Women's Voices in Theology, published in March 2016 by the Women in Leadership Project of Mennonite Church USA, includes essays by **Dorothy Yoder Nyce (MDiv 1981)**, **Laura Brenneman (MATS 2001)**, **Christine Guth (MDiv 2007)**, **Suella Gerber (MDiv 2009)**, and **Katerina Friesen (MDiv 2016)**.



New in the library! The Class of 2016 gave the AMBS library a hammock, which has been quite popular with students and other library users. **Karl Stutzman (CTh 2016)**, new director of library services, reads a new book by **Marty Troyer (MDiv 2008)**, *The Gospel Next Door: Following Jesus Right Where You Are* (Herald, 2016). There are also two new bicycle desks in the library. (Photo by Janeen Bertsche Johnson)

Deaths

Robert Ramseyer (BD 1954), professor emeritus of missions and anthropology, died April 30 in Bluffton, Ohio at the age of 86. He taught at AMBS between 1972 and 1996, alternating with terms of missionary service in Japan. He helped found the Overseas Mission Training Center at AMBS, guiding the formation of mission and service workers before and during assignments.

Marion K. Keeney (MRE 1960), died Feb. 16 at age 81. She served with Mennonite Central Committee in Algeria from 1960 to 1963 and in Zaire from 1972 to 1974. She was an author and writer for

Mennonite Central Committee and the General Conference Mennonite Church, and was active in efforts to promote social justice, including civil rights, interracial relationships and women's roles in ministry. Her memorial service was held March 19 in Newton, Kansas.

Luann Habegger Martin, who was a peace studies student at AMBS in 1974-75 and spent her life in international development, promoting the well-being of women and children, died of cancer in July 2015. In March, her husband, Ray, and family made a \$1 million gift to Mennonite Central Committee in her honor. The gift will fund maternal and child health and nutrition.

Delora Reinhardt (MDiv 2012) died March 14 at age 56. She was a member of the deliverance ministry team at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church in Elkhart County, Indiana.

J. Olen Yoder, died Nov. 14 at Greencroft in Goshen, Indiana, at age 97. He studied at Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Chicago after being a "Seagoing Cowboy" with the Heifer Project. From 1951 to 1958, he was the first on-site director of Camp Friedenswald, Cassopolis, Michigan.

If you have updates to share, send them to jbjohnson@ambs.edu or post them directly in the AMBS Alumni Facebook group.

!Explore to be offered in summer 2017

Thanks to major gifts from two generous donors, **!Explore: A Theological Program for High School Youth** will be able to continue on a regular basis for at least the next decade. The program gives young people in grades 10, 11 and 12 the opportunity to develop leadership skills

and test their gifts for ministry. Through a Group Experience (July 11-26, 2017) and a Congregational Experience (working alongside a pastor for 100 hours over the summer), participants engage the world of theological ideas and foster a call to vocation in the church.

Pastors and church leaders: Do you know any high-school students who would like to explore their gifts for ministry? Encourage them to check out **!Explore!** The application deadline for the 2017 program is **Feb. 1**. Learn more: ambs.edu/explore



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COMING UP AT AMBS

Church Leadership Center

See: ambs.edu

Pastors Week 2017

**Cultivating Intercultural Leadership
for Diversity-Oriented Churches,**
with A. Brian Leander, Ph.D.
Jan. 23 (7 p.m.) – Jan. 26 (12:30 p.m.)

Leadership Clinics

Monday, Jan. 23, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m., on campus

- Congregational Leadership and Ministry in the Face of Sexual Abuse
- Make 4 Hours Count: How to Streamline Bible Study for Ministry
- Sustaining Long-Term Pastorates
- Worshiping our Way into God's Future

Webinars

- **How We Got the Bible**, with Loren Johns, Ph.D., Feb. 9, 2–3:30 p.m. EST
- **Principles of Worship Leading**, with Rachel Miller Jacobs, D.Min., March 9, 2–3:30 p.m. EST

- **Intercultural Leadership in Diversity-Oriented Churches**, with A. Brian Leander, Ph.D., March 23, 2–3:30 p.m. EDT

Bible short course

Biblical Foundations of Creation Care
Ben Ollenburger, Ph.D.
Feb. 15 – March 28, 2017

Online short course

Transforming Congregational Conflict and Communication
Betty Pries, C.Med., MTS, Ph.D. candidate
April 12 – May 23, 2017

Other events

- **Theological Lectureship and Intercultural Reading of the Bible**, with Hans de Wit, professor emeritus, Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam, March 2–4, 2017
- **Seminary Preview Day**, March 3
- **Rooted and Grounded Conference**, April 20–22, 2017



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Winter 2017 Volume 22 Issue 1

AMBS Alumni News is published by Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary. Please send suggestions and news notes about alumni to alumni director Janeen Bertsche Johnson at jbjohnson@ambs.edu.

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A seminary of
Mennonite Church USA and
Mennonite Church Canada